



**U.S. Department of Justice
U.S. Attorney's Office
Western District of Texas**

Johnny Sutton, U.S. Attorney

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

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EL PASO MAN PLEADS GUILTY TO TRANSPORTING ILLEGAL IMMIGRANTS

(PECOS, TEXAS) United States Attorney Johnny Sutton announced today that Hugo Ricardo Ramirez pled guilty to four counts of transporting illegal aliens - two of those counts had the added charge of life endangerment.

According to the criminal complaint, on May 27, 2003, the defendant was the driver of a moving van which was stopped for speeding. Eighteen illegal immigrants, some of which were children, were found hiding in the back of the truck. The rear door of the truck could not be opened from the inside and the front door to the cab was jammed by a mattress.

"Today's guilty plea by Hugo Ramirez is the result of The U.S. Attorney's office aggressively pursuing and prosecuting those who smuggle immigrants. We will continue to hold these individuals accountable for their actions and any harm done to illegal immigrants," stated Johnny Sutton, U.S. Attorney for the Western District of Texas.

The defendant faces a maximum sentence of 60 years in federal prison. This case was investigated by the Bureau of Immigration and Customs Enforcement and the Texas Department of Public Safety and is being prosecuted for the government by Assistant United States Attorney Dwight Goains.

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